

# Massachusetts OHV Advisory Committee

## Meeting Minutes DRAFT

<b>Meeting name</b>	OHV Advisory Committee Meeting (17)		
<b>Date</b>	9-17-14	<b>Time</b>	11:00 AM – 3:00 PM
<b>Location</b>	Dunn State Park, Gardner, MA	<b>Meeting hosts</b>	Stephanie Cooper (EEA) Celia Riechel (EEA)
<b>Committee members present</b>			
Randy Toth (Snowmobile Association of MA)	Jim Sherman (MA Motorcycle Assoc; Hoot Owl Scramblers)	Colleen McGuire (DPH)	Mike Toomey (MA Forest & Parks Friends Network)
Chris Mossman (MA Forest Landowners Association)	Janet Morrison (North County Land Trust)	Tad Ames (Berkshire Natural Resources Council)	Chief Ernest Horn (Mendon Police)
<b>State staff</b>			
Courtney Livingston (MEP)	Gary Briere (DCR)	Lt. Michael Grady (MEP)	Stephanie Cooper (EEA)
Celia Riechel (EEA)	Scott Morrill (DCR)	Capt. Merri Walker (MEP)	
<b>Guests/visitors</b>			
<b>Committee members absent</b>			
Katie Kearney (Child Safety Advocate)	Dan D'Arcy (Power Sport Dealers Association)	VACANT – rep. of OHV users	VACANT – rep. of OHV users

<b>Synopsis of items discussed</b>
<p><b>1. General updates</b></p> <p><b>2. DCR update</b></p> <p>Scott Morrill is DCR trails coordinator for western MA. DCR hopes to get a southeast or statewide trails coordinator in the future.</p> <p><b>West region</b> (see handout: 2014 user statistics):  There were no reports to DCR of OHV accidents in the west, but accidents are not necessarily reported. Challenges are presented by illegal trails leading from abutting properties onto DCR land, and a possible increase in jeeps and trucks using trails. Jeeps and trucks are not permitted on any DCR trail. This was the first year a permit system was used in Beartown. Major storm damage in October Mountain and Beartown required temporary closure of the trail systems there. Many, but not all of the trails were fixed with the help of volunteers and subsequently reopened. Improvements were made to the trail system in Pittsfield SF, specifically the</p>

## **Massachusetts OHV Advisory Committee**

### **Meeting Minutes DRAFT**

installation of an open-box culvert over Lulu Brook, which will be more environmentally sound and prevent additional erosion, and will reconnect the Skyline-Taconic Trail. Most of the funding came from the federal Recreational Trails Program, but \$50,000 in OHV Fund was used as match. DCR hopes to continue to make improvements to OHV trails.

Youth operators must show that they have completed the education and training course to get a permit to ride in Pittsfield, October Mountain, and Beartown, but very few kids have sought permits.

The committee discussed the value of continuing the permit program.

#### **Southeast region** (see handout: South Region OHV update):

Most of the outreach efforts by seasonal DCR rangers has been in Freetown/Fall River SF, particularly around Rattlesnake Brook, where there has been substantial erosion of the embankment as a result of illegal riding. There has been good feedback. Most illegal trails come from abutting private property. Seasonal DCR rangers cannot make arrests, but the increased presence is still helpful in providing additional outreach and education opportunities. Most full-time DCR rangers can issue citations, but cannot make arrests.

### **3. Compliance, ridership, enforcement update (MEP)**

(See law enforcement handout)

Officer hours listed in the handout are those devoted specifically to dedicated OHV patrols.

Discussion of the types of violations found by environmental police officers, and the citations typically issued. OUI is rarely cited due to procedural challenges, but it is thought to be quite common. Officers must use judgment and discretion when determining whether to issue criminal citations or make arrests. Parents are often cited when minors violate the law.

To date there have been six fatalities resulting from OHV accidents in 2014. These were all male adults, and all involved doing something illegal, such as driving on a public road, or the consumption of alcohol. The committee discussed whether there could be a more detailed analysis of fatalities and serious injuries, to identify trends.

MEP is looking into point of sale registration for OHVs. A pilot POS registration is underway for boating, which uses the same system as OHVs. Challenges remain, including the transfer of funds from the dealer to the state, an old and inadequate database system, and lack of personnel or funds to administer. As an intermediate step, dealers are asked to report sales electronically. There is no requirement to register at the time of purchase of an OHV, so even if POS is offered at dealers and is easy, not everyone will.

Courtney Livingston, with assistance from Chief Horn, is working on a simplified Ch. 90B handout/wallet card for municipal police.

**Massachusetts OHV Advisory Committee  
Meeting Minutes DRAFT**

**4. Outreach and education update (MEP)**

Discussion of the YouTube outreach video prepared by the Rendon Group for showing in movie theaters, and also available online. MEP has received a significant increase in phone calls asking about training and education classes and requirements, and an increase in sign-ups for the education course. Discussion of possible additional applications of the film clip, expansion, or other clips emphasizing different aspects of OHV law, safety, or riding areas. Informational OHV posters have been distributed to RMV offices, but they may not be posted. Discussion of whether billboards, signs at highway rest stops, or other venues could be used. Discussion of how humor may improve the effectiveness of messaging.

**5. Riding Areas Grant program**

EEA is finalizing the details of a Request for Responses (RFR) to be issued for a potential OHV Riding Areas Grant program. The program would offer funding to municipalities to develop riding facilities.

**6. OHV Program Fund**

Discussion postponed until next meeting.

**Next steps/action items**

1. Draft options for possible billboard public outreach messages (MEP)
2. Develop best-practices guide for municipalities to use in determining whether to sanction an event (MEP)
3. Consider using on local cable access stations to further distribute video (MEP)
4. OHV Riding Areas Grant Program (EEA)  
  
From previous meetings:
5. Can MA do point-of-sale registration for OHVs?
6. Could small amount of funding be offered to fund volunteer OHV education/outreach presence at local community events or schools?
7. OHV riding permits by smartphone? (DCR)

**Massachusetts OHV Advisory Committee  
Meeting Minutes DRAFT**

8. Request JD Power data on OHV registration for other states (Dan D'Arcy)
9. Regulations revision (MEP)

**Next meeting**

Wednesday, December 17, 11:00am – 3:00pm

Location: Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, Westborough, MA